Chapter 21
The Hindu, Bāniyān, Merchants and Traders

Hindu merchants have doubtless settled in the ports of the southern Arabian littoral from ancient times long before Islam. A Hindu Quarter (Ḥāfat al-Bāniyān)[1] was in 786/1384 so long established in Aden as to be the location mentioned in a will for a property owned by a Muslim, and the problems posed by the existence of a colony of pagan merchants living in a Muslim community figure here and there in the *Fatāwā* of the Shāfi'ī legist Ibn Ja'mān[2] about 1600 A.D. Ettore Rossi[3] even claims that they introduced the sweet-smelling *kādhī* into the Yemen, but if so it was long ago, since the agricultural treatise *Bughyat al-fallāḥīn* of the 8th/14th century already gives detailed instructions for cultivating it. Al-Jarmūzi,[4] writing of the second half of the 11th/17th century, cites an eye-witness as saying that at al-Shiḥr or its coast there are about three hundred merchants of the Bāniyāns, God humiliate them, they being Brahmins (Barāhimah).

The earliest notice of an Indian at Ṣan'ā' at present to hand is a reference to a certain Aḥmad al-Zawm[5] said to have come there in the days of the Turkish Pashas (*al-bawsh min al-Atrāk*) but he may have been of Hindu origin. Another, Ibrāhīm al-Hindī al-Ṣan'ānī (ob. 1101/1689-90) was born of a father who had been one of the number of Bāniyāns who had come to Ṣan'ā' and adopted Islam at the hands of one of the family of the Imāms.[6] Al-Jarmūzī[7] however gives a very enlightening account of the Bāniyāns in the reign of al-Mutawakkil Ismā'īl under the events of the year 1066/1655-6.

> The Bāniyān sect of the Barāhimah of India had grown numerous in the Yemen because of the security (*amān*) they perceived for themselves and their property as, too, the justice accorded them and others. A town or market on land, sea, mountain and plain, without them was rare, to the extent that they had settled in the Shahārah market and people turned to them so as to buy from them, to seek to borrow (*istadān*), and to 'give property on condition that the gain should be divided between them'[8] in their properties—because of the eagerness people have to seek out the least in price and procure advantage (*taysīr*) in business dealings (*mu'āmalah*). This had a serious effect on many of the Muslim traders (*ahl al-bay' wa-'l-shirā'*), becoming specially great in Ṣan'ā' the Preserved, so they complained of it to the Imām[9] who ordered that places confined to them (*maqṣūrah 'alay-him*) should be set (aside) for the Bāniyāns. Notwithstanding, those who had business (*ḥājāt*) approached them as was their custom, and the Ṣan'ā' people again complained to the Imām, the heads (*kibār*) of the Bāniyāns attending. 'What offence to the people of Ṣan'ā' is ours,' they said, 'except that they have been excessive in their evasion and deceit (*taḥayyul wa-gharar*), whereas we have accepted small profits (*fā'idah*) and given the poor (*ḍa'īf*) respite (to pay); in return for goods (*biḍā'ah*) we have accepted goods, out of consideration for what is easiest for those having dealings with us'.[10] Or whatever they (actually) said.
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> The Imām ordered they should be allowed to remain in their places although the Ṣan'ā' people had declared that Ṣan'ā' is not large enough to hold both us and them. When the Bāniyāns returned to Ṣan'ā' people who had business (*ḥājāt*) went to them all the more to buy what they had and do business with them. Often indeed they became the kinder and friendlier to them. The Ṣan'ā' people however spoke and complained much to the learned and virtuous (*ahl al-'ilm wa-'l-faḍl*), saying, 'The Imām's friends (*aṣḥāb*) support infidels (*kuffār*) against Muslims and they have deceived the Commander of the Faithful.' Or whatever they (actually) said.
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> Now the very learned Qāḍī, the virtuous (*fāḍil*) Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ḥusayn b. Yaḥyā al-Saḥūlī used to frequent al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr, attending the recital of the Qur'ān and the litany (*rātib*)[11] the performance of which was observed (*al-muḥāfaẓ 'alay-hi*) in those days, few people not attending the litany in the days of the victorious emergence (*al-makhraj*[12] *al-*

1 Abū Makhramah, *Tārīkh thaghr 'Adan*, ed. O. Löfgren, *Arabische Texte*, II, 155.
2 Cf. my *Portuguese*, 32 seq.
3 *L'Arabo parlato*, 168.
4 *Al-Sirat al-Mutawakkiliyyah*, 257. A. S. Tritton, *Rise of the Imaams of Sanaa*, London-Madras, 1925, 117, 'There are apparently a few references to Banians—Indian merchants' in the 10th-11th H. history he has used.
5 *Nashr al-'arf*, I, 181-2. *Zawm* means boiled curdled milk (*Arabian Studies*, Cambridge-London, 1974, I, 62). This al-Zawm was commissioned to have made for the Pasha's son a *maṣnaf*, waist-wrapper (cf. *Gloss. dat.*) to match one of the weave of al-Dirayhamī (near Hodeidah) which he already had. This would probably be similar to the *maṣnaf* manufactured today at Bayt al-Faqīh, evidently imported to Ṣan'ā' in these days also.
6 Ibid, I, 30. He was of the Ḥanafī rite, common in India, but one would have expected him to be a Zaydī under the circumstances mentioned.
7 Op. cit., 175 seq.
8 *Murabāḥah*, the translation is from Lane's *Lexicon*, but I do not know what sort of transaction this was in Yemen at that time.
9 The Imām was not in Ṣan'ā' at this time.
10 Barter in the country districts of the Yemen was quite common until at least 1962.
11 The Imām had ordered the *rātib al-Qur'ān* to be read in the mosques, especially in Ṣan'ā', and people to assemble to hear it.
12 This is the Imām's conquest of al-Mashriq and parts of Ḥaḍramawt (ibid, 129).

manṣūr) of the Imām. Crowds of all sorts of Ṣan'ā' people who had nothing to do with buying and selling, even their maintenance (*nafaqah*)[13] perhaps coming from the Treasury (Bayt al-Māl), collected along with this public gathering, to the Holy Jāmi', with lighted candles in their hands and shouted at those attending the *rātib*, saying, 'Let your recitation and prayer be against those who support infidels against Muslims!' They shouted at the Qāḍī and demanded he send for (their antagonists), but turned away before he could reply to them—as is the usual way of the likes of the townsfolk. There was tender-heartedness (*riqqah*), patience[14] and gentleness in the Qāḍī (God succour him) and he could do nothing other than keep silent before them. Then, with candles in their hands, they went on in the same fashion, directing themselves towards the Mashhad al-Imām Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, one of the irresponsibles (*sufahā'*) having ascended the minaret of the Jāmi'-Mosque to make (public) announcement of the calamity to Islam and of condolences to the people of (Islam). So our lord 'Alī, son of the Commander of the Faithful (God succour him), ordered them to be arrested, and certain horsemen rode out and plundered such of their cloth/clothes (*thiyāb*) as they were able, arresting some of them. But the rascals (*ahl al-baṭālah*) had extinguished the candles and stolen away under cover of darkness. Many of the Ṣan'ā' people and those of virtue (*faḍl*) wrote to the Imām dissociating themselves (*tabarra'ū*) from what had happened. The Imām ordered those who had committed most of the deeds and those first to speak and act, to be sent up (to him at Shahārah), and he punished them and imprisoned some of them, taking severe measures with them. After this the town quietened down and most of the talk was directed against the Qāḍī Sharaf al-Dīn, that he had allowed them to speak (freely) when they began to leave his house attacking the Imām's person and the virtuous (*fuḍalā'*) also.

Prior to this incident, in the year (10)59/1649 it had happened that one of the Ṣan'ā' people had come across something in the shape of idols with one of the Bāniyāns—this latter having hung it up in a place in his shop (*ḥānūt*) and inside the warehouse (*samsarah*). In (his) disapproval the Ṣan'ānī shouted out at the top of his voice, saying 'Help O Muslims, something other than Allāh is being worshipped in Ṣan'ā'!' The *faqīh* Luṭfullāh b. Aḥmad al-Saḥūlī relates, 'I was one of those who ran to give aid (*sāra'a 'l-ghārah*)[15] to the *samsarah*,' (the *faqīh* having business (*a'māl*) in the Market and *samsarah*), 'but', he said, 'I wasn't able to pass through since the streets and mouths of the lanes filled (with people)—so it wasn't possible (to do so) except with helpers[16] and with difficulty.' He went on, 'We seized it—and there it turned out to be a thing of brass (*naḥās*) like a pair of scissors of medium (size) or rather smaller than that, in which was some resemblance to men (*ādamiyyūn*). So we arrested[17] him, locked up the Bāniyān's goods in his shop, shutting it up tightly, and sent up the news about him to our lord 'Alī, son of the Commander of the Faithful, and he passed it on to the Imām who ordered the Bāniyān to be sent up to him. When he came to him he ordered him to leave the land of the Muslims. He petitioned that Imām for a period of respite in which to recover debts (owing to him) and to pay what he owed the Muslims. So he gave him four months respite, but made (public) witness against him that if he should be found that he would be beheaded.'

The Imām remained some time considering the affair of the (Bāniyāns) and their large numbers. Then he commanded that the poll-tax (*jizyah*) be (imposed) upon them, and that a proclamation be made concerning collecting it from them. A *qirsh* per month was imposed on each person, lowered or raised according to their condition.[18] In the Yemen they had numbered thousands, and many of them refused to submit to it and returned to India—this being what the Imām wished—to lower their numbers.

The disturbance of 1066/1655-6 is reported from a different point of view by the author of *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*.[19] In Ramaḍān, he says 'a body of the people and Ṣūfis of Ṣan'ā' ganged up together against the Bāniyāns because of their corrupting (*taghyīr*) the Statute of buying and selling (*Qānūn al-bay' wa-'l-shirā'*) and because of their attempting to gain ascendancy[20] over the Muslims in the *khānāt* and other things. The Ṣan'ānīs considered this one of their evil actions and ardently desired to expel them, were that possible for them. When the Imām heard of this he disclaimed what they had done, and apprised them that the (Bāniyāns) came under his protection by virtue of paying the poll-tax, and that a legal (*shar'ī*) proof upon which to rest a case for the breaking off the covenant of protection (*kharm al-dhimmah*) was essential, but no word had been heard about that (*wa-yaṣiḥḥ al-sukūt 'alayhi*). He then consigned a group of them to one of the forts but released them after a few days.'

As in the parallel case of the Jews, the Imām displayed great firmness in refusing to have his protection of the Bāniyāns violated even if there might be popular feeling against them. The alliance against the Bāniyāns was one of merchants or shopkeepers and 'Ṣūfis', this latter probably not a term of approbation in a Zaydī author, but, from al-Jarmūzī's version of the affair, it looks as if the Bāniyāns were far from unpopular with the customers of the Ṣan'ā' shopkeepers. The shopkeepers, significantly, based their case on the commercial code, *scilicet*, of the city, an undoubted ancestor of the *Statute* (*Qānūn*) *of Ṣan'ā'*, which has already been studied in detail.

Occasional acts of violence there might be, as when a slave knocked out the eye of a Bāniyān,[21] but the fact that the event was recorded seems to show they were exceptional. On the other hand Bāniyāns and Jews were occasionally marked out in commotions and such troubles (*fitnah*) as that of Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Maḥaṭwarī[22] (a son of the Imām al-Qāsim al-'Iyānī) who, from the time of his rising in 1111/1699-70, slew an uncounted number of Jews and Bāniyāns—massacring over a thousand Jews and Bāniyāns at Ḥajjah, 'Affār, Kuḥlān and al-Ṣalabah.[23] He also circumcised a vast number of Bāniyāns. He appears however to have been a fanatic and a butcher, and is described by Zabārah as a magician (*sāḥir*).

The French captain de la Roque[24] who visited the southern coasts of the Yemen between the years 1708-13 supplies us with details about the Bāniyāns unrecorded in the Arab sources. On his arrival in Aden the principal Bāniyāns who are the 'Brokers of Arabia' came to pay the French a visit and offer their services—de la Roque calls their headman 'the Captain of the Banyans'. These Bāniyāns, 'by the assistance of whom all the Trade in *Arabia* is managed', come from the Indies and particularly the island of Diu. 'They come into *Arabia* in their youth, to seek

13 Those maintained by the Treasury would presumably be holders of minor religious offices, etc., and may be identified with the Ṣūfis of the parallel account *infra*.

14 *Riqqah* also means weakness, and gentleness might also be rendered as sedateness, calmness. The word rendered as 'patience', reading *'azāyah* for the text's *ra'āyah* is conjectural.

15 For *ghārah*, cf. p. 147a.

16 By helpers, an officer, armed attendant may be meant.

17 Or it could mean, 'seized it'. A nailing up of the *khānāt* of the Bāniyān money changer (reading *al-Bāniyān al-ṣayrafī*) at Raymah for some unstated reason, is mentioned in *Nashr al-'arf*, I, 730.

18 Perhaps to be understood as a block sum imposed on the community but the individuals would contribute according to their means.

19 Op. cit., 30 b.

20 Arabic *isti'lā'*.

21 *Nashr al-'arf*, I, 555.

22 Ibid, I, 42. Ibrāhīm was from hijrat al-Maḥaṭwar.

23 Al-Ṣalabah is in al-Sharaf; from an agricultural point of view a *ṣalabah* is a place not planted.

24 *Voyage to Arabia Foelix*, London, 1732, 44-5, 131-4.

their Fortune by Trade.' 'There are among them very rich Merchants, many Weighers of Gold and Silver, and Men in short of all sorts of Trades. For the rest, they are the cleverest Arithmeticians in the World; for, out of three or four Characters traced upon the Thumb Nail, when they are in haste, they sum up an exact Account in the twinkling of an Eye. Nevertheless, it behoves one to be upon the Guard with them, for they cheat with a wonderful deal of Skill. For my Part, I believe that the Commerce of these People has spoil'd the *Arabs*, who are naturally sincere and honest, making it a point of Honour to appear such; but they have found the way to cheat also, when they can do it with Safety.'

'The *Arabs*, who abhor these *Banyans*, and suffer them among them only on account of Trade, do not permit them to marry in *Arabia*, nor to have any correspondence with their Women; so that they are oblig'd to return to the *Indies*, when they have a mind to marry, and have made some Fortune in *Arabia*.'

In the very year that de la Roque arrived at Aden the town of Ibb was sacked by the Yāfi'ī tribe who took everything there was in its market and the *Khān* of the Bāniyān and the mosques.[25]

In the 12th/18th century there rose to influence one of the strictest, yet greatest of the Zaydī ulema, al-Badr Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī[26], a *mujtahid* and *mujaddid*, and the author of a large number of treatises. He took a severe attitude to both Bāniyāns and Jews—in the case of the latter he had some provocation as recounted above, but where the Bāniyāns are concerned he seems to have been motivated by the desire to see a strict application of Islamic law. The Qāḍī 'Abdullāh b. Muḥyi 'l-Dīn al-'Arāsī put the question to him in verse[27], as to whether it is lawful 'to extend security to the polytheist . . . like the Bāniyān(s) and their like—those who worship other than the Guardian (Allāh).' 'Nay', he asserts, 'there came to us the prohibition that anyone who rejects the *sharī'ah* should remain in our island.'[28] In verse too came the rejoinder, that there were three categories of non-Muslims. Of these the Ahl al-Kitāb, here the Jews, have the right to live in quarters of their own far from the Muslims, but he denies that by analogy that the 'foreigner like Bishrām and one who worships the calf and the light-diffusing sun' can, by analogy with the Ahl al-Kitāb, be accorded protection provided they pay the poll-tax (*jizyah*). This of course is in direct controversion of the argument of al-Mutawakkil Ismā'īl in the preceding century.

The Imām al-Mahdī al-'Abbās, about the third quarter of the 12th/18th century, did indeed take some action against the Bāniyāns when[29] 'he gave instructions that the idols that were in Mocha *bandar*, belonging to the Bāniyān sect should be removed, and al-Badr (Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Amīr) composed a valuable treatise on this.[30] Al-Mahdī promptly ordered them (the idols) to be removed and their temples (*buyūt*) to be demolished. He seized all their[31] property for they had extensive property, about 50,000 *riyāls*. Then he took and sent one of their idols to His Majesty the Imām at a time when al-Badr was with him. So al-Badr ordered it to be broken up—it having the form of a female—and it was trodden underfoot with sandals.'

Though al-Mahdī 'Abbās did not expel the Bāniyāns for the obvious reasons given earlier by de la Roque, he did try to impose a sumptuary law upon them. A well known astrologer (*munajjim*), evidently an almanac compiler of the sort one still finds today, wrote, 'In this year's almanac there are torches (*mashā'il*) lit over the heads of the Bāniyān(s) and I see a flame bursting forth from their bodies. So (the Imām) made them wear red and made an innovation (? *badda'a*) with them, but subsequently they sought deliverance of him and he absolved them from (wearing) red gowns (*ummuṣ*), but he did not absolve them from (red) turbans, so that they became a current custom (*sunnah*) on the necks of those who disbelieve.'[32]

Two European travellers, each approximately contemporary with the two phases of formulation of the *Qānūn Ṣan'ā'*, *have* noticed the existence in Ṣan'ā' of these Hindu merchants. For the year 1763 Niebuhr[33] gives the figure of about 125 Bāniyāns in Ṣan'ā' who paid 300 *écus* (i.e. dollars) each month to the Imām—whereas the large village at Qā' al-Yahūd paid only 125 *écus*. As a sort of death duty when a Bāniyān died his heirs paid 10-15 *écus* to the Imām. It was they, no doubt, who dealt largely in the Indian, Persian and Turkish merchandise that Niebuhr found in the Ṣan'ā' markets, and of course in the 19th century the *Qānūn Ṣan'ā'* shows that they were paying watch-tax plus collection charges of 60 *qirsh*, whereas the Jews of Sūq 'Aqīl paid 46¾ *qirsh*—both far and away the highest charges in the Market, but some indication of the relative wealth of the two communities. Cruttenden[34] (1836) found that, 'The Banians are also numerous, but they are compelled, like the Jews, to conceal what they really possess, and however wealthy they may be, to put on an outward appearance of abject poverty.' Cruttenden and other Western travellers were probably inclined to consider the situation of Bāniyāns and Jews in detachment from that of the Muslim merchants and shopkeepers vis-à-vis Government officials and soldiers able and liable to 'squeeze' traders of any of the three religions alike, as will be seen in the case of the Mocha merchant Sa'd al-Dīn al-'Udaynī.

On the whole Muslim society seems to have treated Bāniyāns and Jews with toleration, but whereas with the Jews this was often accompanied by a certain respect and affection to judge by the proverbial literature and what I have heard many times from Yemenis of today themselves, de la Roque's summing up of their sentiments towards the Bāniyāns who were foreigners and with no real stake in the country in contradistinction to the Jews who may be called simply non-Muslim Yemenis, must be accepted as valid. The Arab proverb[35] says, *'Mā kān fi 'l-ruzz quwwah wa-lā fi 'l-Hindī muruwwah*, There is no strength (good) in rice, and no manliness/chivalry/honour in the Indian.'

A tale illustrative of business activities and inter-relations of Indians, Muslim Arabs and the Government official, is related by Zabārah,[36] and is to be dated some time after 1141 H./1728 A.D. One of the foreign Indian merchants (*aghrāb al-Hunūd*)[37] died at Mocha, leaving no heir other than the Treasury (Bayt al-Māl), and the inferior quality of cloth (*al-bazz al-ḍa'īf*) he had in his place had been transferred to the port (*bandar*). Now the shaykh, Sa'd al-Dīn (al-'Udaynī), had about 600 *riyāls* with which he wished to purchase goods, so the headmen of the Market (*'uqqāl al-Sūq*) urged him to purchase the property of the (deceased) Indian—which he found to be of inferior quality, yet was obliged to go through with it. "I have only 600 *riyāls*," he said. To which they replied, "We shall grant you a stay up to the coming season (*mawsim*)[38] for the greater part of the price, but bring what you have in hand." The cloth was valued at 3,000 *riyāls*.'

25 *Nashr al-'arf*, II, 876.
26 Ibid, II, 505 seq.
27 *Dīwān al-Amīr al-Ṣan'ānī*, ed. 'Alī al-Sayyid Ṣabaḥ/Ṣubḥ (?) al-Madanī, Cairo, 1964, 95, seq.
28 *Bal fi jazirati-nā ata-na 'l-nahyu 'an*
Ibqā'i man huwa li-'l-sharī'a ti jāhidu.
29 *Nashr al-'arf*, II, 519.
30 The editor of *Dīwān al-Amīr*, 11, calls it, *Risālah fi wujūb izālat aṣnām al-Hind (al-Bāniyān)*, 'A treatise on the obligation to remove the idols of the Indians, the Bāniyāns.' He adds that they were openly practising the rites of their worship in Mocha port. The treatise was composed for the Imām al-Mahdī 'Abbās.
31 The property of the temples seems intended.
32 *Nashr al-'arf*, II, 215.
33 *Description*, I, 336. On p. 340 he mentions a Bāniyān *ṣarrāf* or money-changer.
34 'Journey from Mochá to Ṣan'á', 284-5.
35 *Arabian Studies*, I, 72.
36 *Nashr al-'arf*, I, 727.
37 *Gharīb* is a term also used in *Qānūn Ṣan'ā'*, p. 183a, passim. By Hunūd the Bāniyāns are usually meant.
38 The *mawsim/mūsim* is the time of the arrival of the India trading fleet with the monsoon. See my *Portuguese*, 82.

'When he arrived back at his place with what he had brought (*ajlaba*) he decided to give alms (*ṣadaqah*) to the needy from it, but he pledged himself to God not to sell any of it before covering[39] any defects in it. So he examined it and inside each piece he found some sort of the most splendid, expensive and finest qualities (of cloth) with which the Indian had done this for fear it might be discovered—the price of this came to many thousands in money.'

The rest of the tale, though it has nothing to do with the deceased Indian Bāniyān, is too characteristic of life in the Yemen to omit. Sa'd al-Dīn who had started life by de-husking coffee (*khalāṣ al-bunn min qishri-hi*) when he became rich, was along with his brother, envied for their wealth. The Amīr of Ta'izz, clearly with intent to 'squeeze' them, summoned them to come to him. They demurred, but after pressing, set out for Ta'izz with 30,000 Maria Theresa dollars (*riyāl Farānṣah*) in the hope of averting any trouble by the Amīr, beseeching God to aid them with the Amīr. As they entered the Gate of Ta'izz they heard the Amīr's death being announced, and they realised that their prayer had been answered!

Yemeni comment to me on this story was that at the customs post of al-Rāhidah today, people try to outwit the customs in identically the same way by concealing valuables inside inexpensive cloth!

A curious sidelight is thrown on the business practice of the Bāniyāns in Ṣan'ā' by another of Qāḍī Ismā'īl's proverbs.[40] *'Idhā fallas al-tājir sarraj,* When a merchant goes bankrupt he lights the lamps' in his shop (*ḥānūt*) during the day-time, and the news of his insolvency becomes known and other merchants come to divide out among his creditors such assets as still remain to him. The Qāḍī considers this was a Bāniyān custom which they introduced during the Ottoman occupation[41] when insolvencies were frequent among individuals of that community. However, *'Idhā sār/harab al-Hindī f-ibnih 'indī*, If the Indian runs away I still have his son.'[42] One customarily says this of a debtor delaying repayment, but the creditor has something that ensures he will obtain his due. Goitein gives other interpretations of the proverb but reports that it applies to the insolvent Hindu Bāniyān banker.

It is to be noted that Bāniyān warehouses are more often perhaps known as *khāns* and not *samsarahs.* In the Ḥaḍramī port of al-Shiḥr a Sūq al-Khān is known to historians, but not to Shiḥrīs whom I have asked today—there is however a Sūq al-Hunūd. Al-Khafanjī the gifted poet of *malḥūn* verse of the 12th/18th century speaks of a *samsarah* belonging to the Bāniyān in Bīr al-'Azab.[43]

In the disorders about 1850 in Ṣan'ā' 'the Jews and foreign merchants were dispoiled of all they possessed',[44] and even after the election of al-Ḥaymī the anarchy was such that 'but three Banyan merchants remained in the city; and of these two were murdered during his (the Rev. Stern's) stay, and their property seized by the governor; the third, a very old man, was on the point of abjuring his religion, in the hope of saving his life.'[45] Nevertheless there were still many Bāniyāns in the Yemen until after World War I, following which their numbers are stated to have greatly diminished, but one still sees a few in the newer parts of Ṣan'ā'. During Imām Aḥmad's 'Journey' in the Tihamah in Imām Yaḥya's day there were Bāniyāns and Bohrah in Hodeidah.

An eye-witness at the British conquest of Aden reports that 'Aden contained 600 inhabitants before hostilities commenced of whom 250 were Jews, 50 Banyans, and the remainder Arabs.'[46] At the taking of the town, 'The Banyans and Jews took refuge in a mosque with a flag of truce flying and were unmolested.' He further describes the Hindu place of worship in Crater. This does seem to imply the existence of a great measure of practical tolerance by the Arab Muslims there of other religions.

39 By covering the defects the author probably means making them good, not concealing them.

40 *Al-Amthāl al-Yamāniyah*, I, 108, no. 302.

41 I surmise that he means the second Ottoman occupation. Wellsted, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1837, says of the Bāniyāns of Muscat that a bankrupt sits in his shop with candles lit while his creditors come and beat him, cf. P. Helfer, *Travels*, London, 1878, II, 6. It is interesting to note that they controlled the coffee trade and dealt in Persian tobacco.

42 Ibid, I, 88, no. 247; *Jemenica*, 22, no. 111, the latter adding that in Ṣan'ā' they do not often appear.

43 *Nashr al-'arf*, II, 195.

44 R. L. Playfair, *A history of Arabia Felix of Yemen*, Bombay, 1859, and 1970 reprint, 155.

45 Ibid, 156.

46 In J. Kirkman and B. Doe, 'The first days of British Aden', *Arabian Studies*, Cambridge-London, 1975, p. 179ff. This is the account of John Studdyleigh, discovered by J. Kirkman. It is interesting to compare with statistics I have quoted in Michael Adams, *The Middle East*, London, 1971, a little after the conquest. The Bāniyāns numbered 35, the Somalis 26 males, 37 females, the Jews 257 males, 301 females. The Arab population was 276 males, 341 females and formed only some 44% of the total population.